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Three Congregations Receive New Pastors

The Southeast Conference is pleased to announce that three of our local churches have called new pastors to their congregations within the past few weeks.

Beloved Community Church, Birmingham AL
belovedcommunitychurch.org

Jennifer Sanders is the newly elected pastor of Beloved Community Church. Jennifer worked in refugee resettlement, Medicaid eligibility and outreach, botanical education, and community and medical settings as an occupational therapist for people with disabilities and acute illnesses before entering the ministry. Two years ago, she developed an innovative approach to community ministry called What the Heart Holds: A Ministry of Manifest Concern for All Creation.

Sanders has a bachelor's degree in history and political science from Rice University and graduated from UAB in 1998 with a master's degree in occupational therapy. She worked for more than 15 years as an occupational therapist at nursing homes and hospitals in Birmingham. She's currently working on a master of divinity degree from Chicago Theological Seminary, affiliated with the United Church of Christ. Jennifer lives with her partner, teenage daughter, five dogs, a turtle, and a frog. In her free time, she enjoys camping, kayaking, reading, and traveling. You can often find Jennifer drinking coffee and engaged in deep conversations, both in person and online, with people of all ages.

Church of the Savior UCC, Alpharetta GA
cosucc.org

Church of the Savior UCC, in Alpharetta, Georgia, has called the Rev. Paul Hackett as Pastor. A graduate of Columbia Theological Seminary, Rev. Hackett brings a tremendous amount of experience to the church, having spent 20 years in business management and as former pastor of New Hope Church of Dunwoody (CRCNA). He is currently a full-time elementary math and science teacher.

Founded in 1983 in Roswell, Georgia, and originally a Southern Baptist congregation, Church of the Savior joined the UCC in 2001 and became an ONA (Open & Affirming) congregation very shortly thereafter. The congregation has been on quite a journey. After the passing of long-time pastor, Rev. Dr. Chris Graham, in 2012, the church decided to free itself of its oversized building and mortgage and take time to examine themselves and their church during a discernment process. Changes started happening in 2015 with the purchase of a new church building and much more exciting change is expected with the calling of Paul as pastor.

Virginia Highland Church, Atlanta GA
vhchurch.org

Rev. Claudia Aguilar Rubalcava has been called by Virginia Highland Church to serve as Pastor for Justice and Witness. She was ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA) in 2012. Claudia earned her Master of Arts (Theological Studies) degree with a specialization in Christian Ethics at Columbia in 2008 and her Master of Divinity degree in 2011. She has served as a pastoral intern at Mercy Community Church, Westminster Presbyterian Church of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and as a campus minister at the Pontifical University of Chile and at her alma mater, Monterrey Institute of Technology, where she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in International Relations.

Claudia loves her family, her hometown, Mexico City, and exploring Atlanta. She also enjoys cooking and baking for friends and family, listening to music, playing with her dog, and trying to become a master gardener with her husband Doug.

‹ Jottings from June: November 1, 2016 Caring Community: November 1, 2016 ›

Upcoming Events